



THE COUNTY OF CHESTER



COMMISSIONERS
Marian D. Moskowitz
Josh Maxwell
Michelle Kichline

Brian N. O'Leary, AICP
Executive Director

PLANNING COMMISSION
Government Services Center, Suite 270
601 Westtown Road
P. O. Box 2747
West Chester, PA 19380-0990
(610) 344-6285 Fax (610) 344-6515

April 3, 2020

Casey LaLonde, Manager
West Goshen Township
1025 Paoli Pike
West Chester, PA 19380

Re: Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map Amendment – Planned University Main Campus Overlay District
West Goshen Township – ZA-03-20-16290

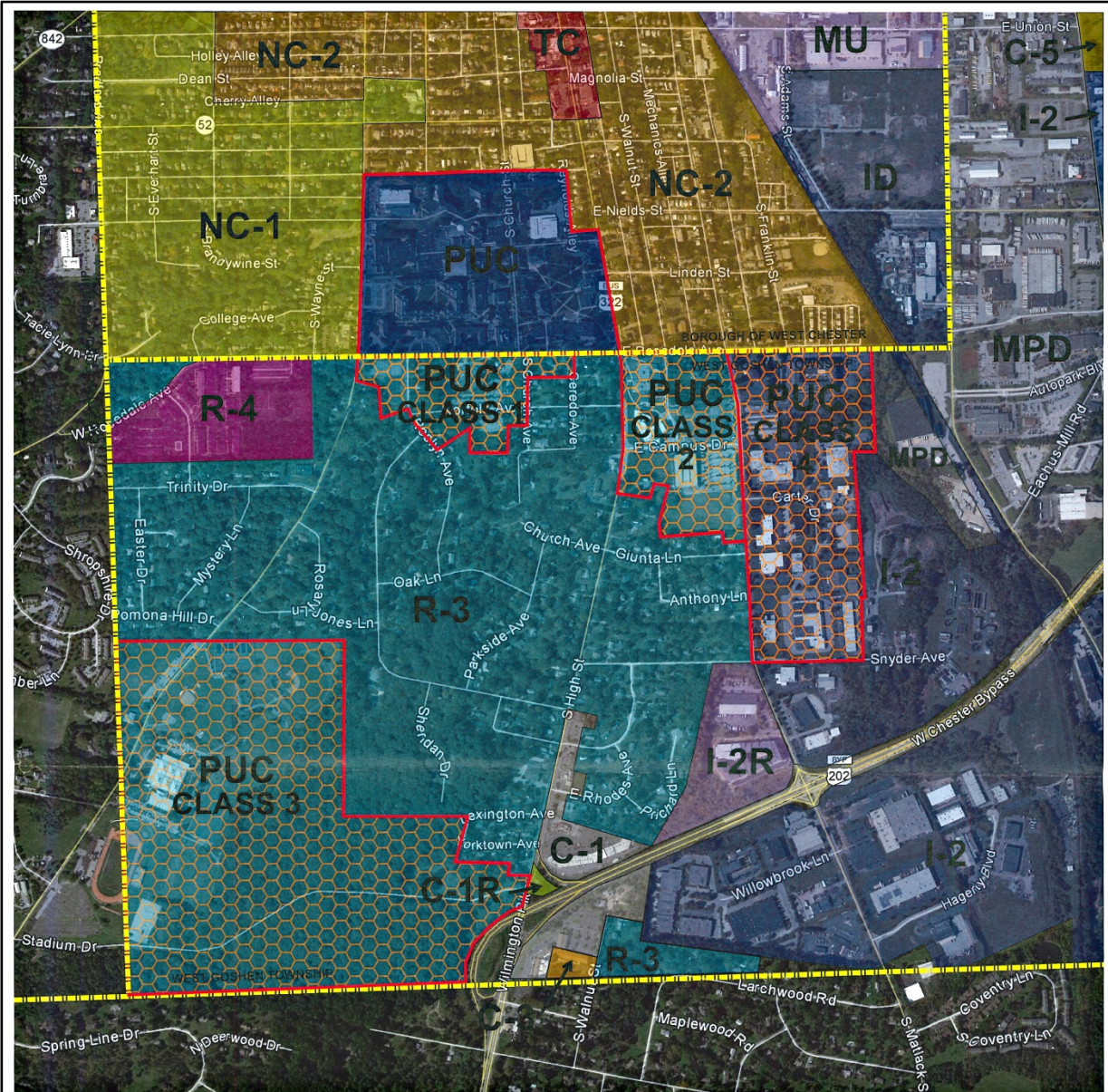
Dear Mr. LaLonde:

The Chester County Planning Commission has reviewed the proposed Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map Amendment as submitted pursuant to the provisions of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Section 609(e). The referral for review was received by this office on March 6, 2020. We offer the following comments to assist in your review of the proposed amendments.

DESCRIPTION:

1. The Township proposes the following amendments to its Zoning Ordinance:
 - A. Amend Section 84-4, by adding references to the Planned University Main Campus District Overlay District;
 - B. Add the following definitions to Section 84-8: Athletic Facility – Intercollegiate Competition Use, Athletic Facility – Recreational Use, Auditorium, University Educational Facilities, “University Offices, Administrative and Faculty,” On-Campus, Parking Garage, “Parking Lot, Surface,” Student Recreation Center, Student Services, University, University Main Campus, University Food Service Facilities, University Bookstore Facilities, University Gymnasium, University Health and Counseling Facilities, University Physical Plant Facilities, and “Utility Uses, Facilities and Structures”;
 - C. Amend the following definitions in Section 84-8: Educational Use, and Student Housing; and
 - D. Add Article XXVII, Planned University Main Campus Overlay District. Purpose and Intent, Applicability, Use Regulations, area and bulk regulations, and submission requirements are provided. We acknowledge that the purpose and intent of the Overlay District, as set forth in the introductory language in Section 84-133, is to recognize the unique character and interrelated complexities of appropriately regulating the campus use of West Chester University, relative to the issues set forth in this section. We also note that Section 84-134 states that Overlay District standards shall be applicable to certain portions of the R-3 Residential and I-2 Light Industrial zoning districts, when approved by conditional use.
2. The Township proposes to apply the PUC Class 1, PUC Class 2, PUC Class 3, and PUC Class 4 sub-districts to the list of parcels provided in Section 3 of the draft Ordinance. We acknowledge that Overlay District maps are provided in Exhibit A of the draft Ordinance.

RECOMMENDATION: The Township should consider the comments in this letter before acting on the proposed zoning ordinance and zoning map amendment.



Zoning Map

PLANNED UNIVERSITY CAMPUS DISTRICT

February 18, 2020

Detail-Exhibit A (page 1), Planned University Main Campus Overlay District

Page: 3
Re: Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map Amendment – Planned University Main Campus Overlay District
West Goshen Township – ZA-03-20-16290

AREA EVALUATION:

The following land use planning policies and regulations are relevant to the proposed Overlay District:

3. Water and Sewer Facilities: According to County mapping records, this area of the Township is served by public water and public sewer facilities.
4. Municipal Comprehensive Plan: The Future Development Plan map in the Township's 2019 Comprehensive Plan indicates that the Overlay District is located in the Existing Institutional Use, Existing Public Park/Open Space, and Commercial, Office, Industrial Infill designations. We note that the Existing Public Park/Open Space designation within the proposed Overlay District is the Robert B. Gordon Natural Heritage Area included in the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Index (PNDI), which is administrated in collaboration with West Chester University's Office of Sustainability, as identified online at: www.wcupa.edu/gordonNaturalArea/default.aspx.

LANDSCAPES:

5. The proposed Overlay District is located within the **Suburban Landscape**, **Urban Center Landscape**, and **Natural Landscape** designations of [Landscapes3](#), the 2018 County Comprehensive Plan. The vision for the **Suburban Landscape** is predominantly residential communities with locally-oriented commercial uses and facilities, accommodating growth at a medium density that retains a focus on residential neighborhoods, with enhancements in housing diversity and affordability. Additionally, roads, sidewalks and paths with convenient access to parks and community facilities should be provided. The vision for the **Urban Center Landscape** is historic downtown and established neighborhoods serving as civic, economic, and population centers with a traditional town character, accommodating substantial future growth at a medium to high intensity. Transportation infrastructure improvements and amenities supporting a walkable community should be provided and integrated into the public transportation and roadway systems. As an overlay of all other landscapes, the county's **Natural Landscapes** consist of a network of streams, wetlands, floodplains, and forests that are protected by regulations or should be subject to limited disturbance. Conservation practices should protect and restore these natural resources. The proposed zoning ordinance and zoning map amendment is consistent with the objectives of [Landscapes3](#).

COMMENTS:

6. It is our understanding that West Chester Borough and West Goshen Township, in consultation with West Chester University, have been working towards the creation of an overlay district that encompasses the current properties owned by West Chester University. We acknowledge that Section 84-133.A of the proposed Zoning Ordinance states that one of the purposes of the amendment is to plan for orderly, coordinated, unified development of the University Main Campus and related uses by developing uniform standards with adjacent municipalities. We also acknowledge that one of the overarching planning goals of West Chester Borough's 2017 Comprehensive Plan & Urban Center Revitalization Plan is to "strengthen community partnership with West Chester University to collectively address a range of issues related to preserving quality of life the in the Borough" (page 11).

Page: 4
Re: Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map Amendment – Planned University Main Campus Overlay District
West Goshen Township – ZA-03-20-16290

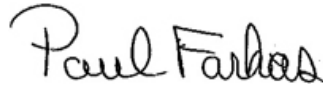
The Township and West Chester Borough should coordinate their reviews of the proposed ordinance language, in order to ensure that consistent standards and terminology are adopted in both municipal ordinances. As of March 31, 2020, the Chester County Planning Commission has not received a zoning amendment submission from West Chester Borough on this matter.

7. Prior to taking action on this amendment, the Township should ensure that the draft amendment is generally consistent with its municipal Comprehensive Plan, as set forth in Section 603(j) of the PA Municipalities Planning Code (PA MPC). We acknowledge that the community goal for housing in the Comprehensive Plan (page 62) is to protect the quality of the existing housing stock and meet the housing needs of current and future residents by providing for housing options that accommodate households at various life stages and income levels, and we note that Section 84-133.B of the Zoning Ordinance states that the purpose and intent of the proposed ordinance includes the following: “Strengthen, maintain and preserve neighborhoods and improve existing housing stock in neighborhoods which surround or are immediately outside of the University Main Campus.” The Township may wish to consider including similar policy support language for the Campus Overlay District in the appropriate section of their comprehensive plan. We also note that proposed overlay district areas generally correspond to either the Existing Institutional Use areas shown on the Future Development Plan map, or the Robert B. Gordon Natural Heritage Area that is administrated in part by the University’s Office of Sustainability.
8. Section 84-137.A states that no land development or change in use of an existing building from a use not previously utilized by the University shall occur except in compliance with the Overlay District regulations. For clarity purpose, the Township should identify if this requirement would also apply to a change in use of a building that is currently used by the University.
9. We suggest that multimodal transportation options such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities be added to the list of strategies and initiatives to be included in a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan, as set forth in Section 84-140.A(1).
10. The second line in Section 84-141.E on page 18 contains an extra comma (“...on the University’s Master Plan, , independent...”) which should be removed in the final draft.
11. While subsection B of Section 84-144, Sustainability, states that all proposed buildings shall be designed to meet LEED Silver Certification criteria, we suggest that the Township include a basic definition of “sustainability” as it applies to this ordinance.
12. Section 84-145.C states that, after submission and approval of the initial University Campus Plan, the Master Site Plan which is approved by conditional use by the Board shall be valid for a period of ten (10) years from the date of approval. We suggest that the Township and University review the plan at five (5) year intervals to determine if updates are needed prior to the ten year mark.
13. Prior to taking action on this amendment, the Township should ensure that they have met the posting and notification requirements for zoning map amendments as set forth in Section 609 of the PA Municipalities Planning Code (PA MPC).

Page: 5
Re: Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map Amendment – Planned University Main Campus Overlay
District
West Goshen Township – ZA-03-20-16290

We request an official copy of the decision made by the Township Supervisors, as required by Section 609(g) of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. This will allow us to maintain a current file copy of your ordinance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Farkas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paul Farkas
Senior Review Planner

cc: West Chester University (Attn. Brian Nagle, Esquire, MacElree Harvey, Ltd)
Kevin Gore, Director of Building, Housing & Codes Enforcement, West Chester Borough
Amanda M. Cantlin, Township Manager, East Bradford Township
William Etheridge, Director of Planning & Zoning, Westtown Township